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How
We
Unplug



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HOBBIES: Running, reading, snuggling with puppies

HIDDEN TALENT: I play violin

WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOU:
I'm a big introvert when I'm not working

FAVORITE MN EXPERIENCE / EVENT: State Fair

WHAT IS YOUR ESTABLISHMENT KNOWN FOR:
Roast beef sandwiches

BEST HANGOVER CURE: Bloody mary, greasy/fried food

WHAT'S THE WORST DATE YOU'VE EVER WITNESSED?:
It ended in a very serious and non-playful snowball fight

WHAT'S THE STRANGEST DRINK REQUEST YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED: "Voodoo" - mountain dew and vodka

SAGE BARTENDER ADVICE: Get to know your regulars

BARTENDER
OF THE WEEK

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HOW WE UNPLUG

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SPECIAL GUEST

CYNDI LAUPER

OCTOBER 14



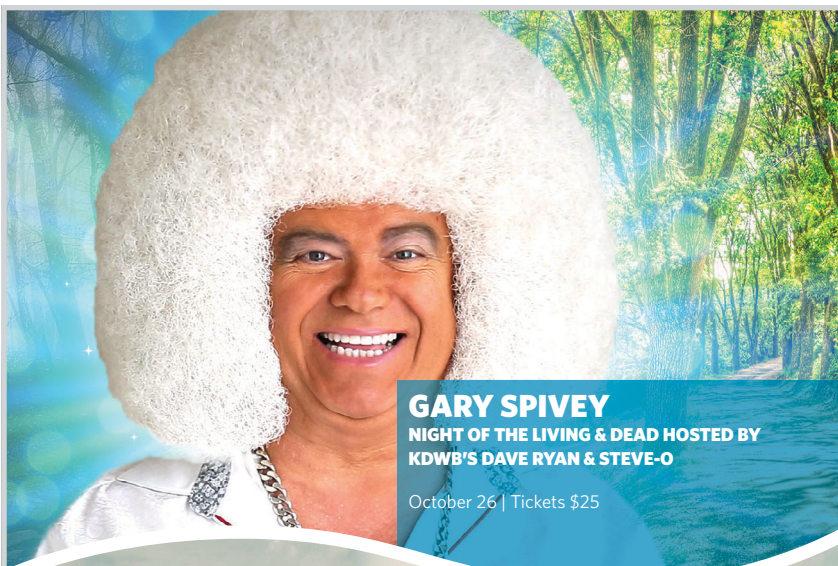
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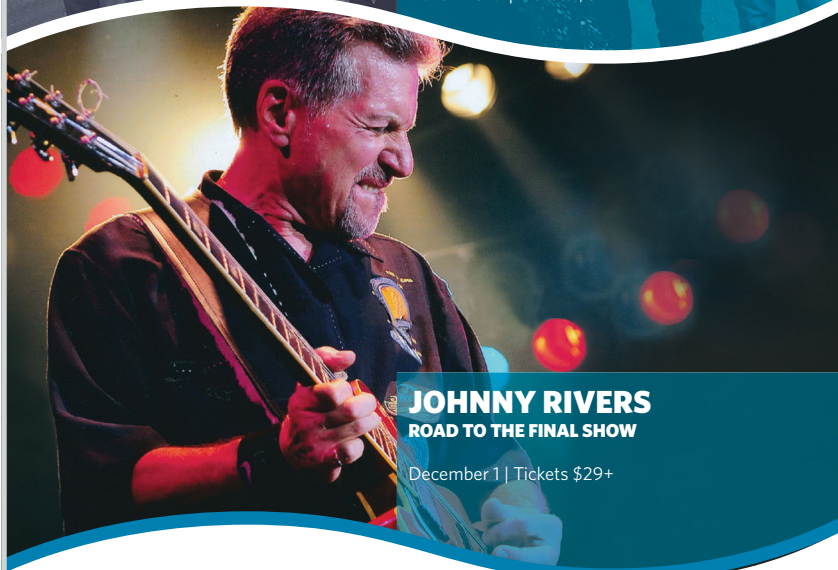
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THE SHORTLIST

Scenes from the
'We #BelieveChristine'
solidarity rally
in Minneapolis
citypages.com



EMILY UTNE

THE STAT SHEET

7,000

Number of beds available each night
in transitional and emergency housing
for homeless Minnesotans

60

Number of retailers that
have already committed to staying
closed on Thanksgiving Day

7,600

Estimated number of homeless
Minnesotans who need a place
to stay each night

7%

Estimated cost increase for Minnesotans
shopping online, now that all online
retailers are required to collect sales tax

"The internet has become an essential public utility like sewer, water, electricity, public education, or roads. Rather than being treated as "optional" and being subject to P&L sheets (like cable) it should be a guaranteed service (like the electric grid).
We all do better when we all do better."

Nathan Moore responds to "Rural Minnesota rising: Failed by capitalism, residents seize control of their internet destiny" on citypages.com

TRASH TALK

THE WORLD MIGHT SEEM like a flaming pile of trash right now, but why speak ill of burning trash? Incinerators like the Great River Energy facility currently for sale in Elk River divert more than 250,000 tons of garbage from landfills each year by burning it for energy. And if no one steps up to buy the GRE incinerator—both Hennepin and Anoka County have declined—the four landfills the Twin Cities currently uses for its trash will be brimming two years ahead of schedule. Perhaps it's time to retire "dumpster fire" as shorthand for the decline of our Western democracy and pivot to something more ominous. "Festering landfill" anyone?

POPULAR STORIES

AT CITYPAGES.COM

Target employee claims
SEXUAL HARASSMENT,
and that management
didn't stop it

Equifax lost the lawsuit.
So why won't they **PAY UP**?

Right-wing 'journalist' claims
'Somali mobs' shut down Valleyfair;
SHAKOPEE PD disagrees

CRAIG FINN's
'Mark David Chapman-esque'
stalker surrenders to cops

UB40 would've hated
BRETT KAVANAUGH

UNFORGIVABLE

Minnetonka company sued for tricking students into paying for free ‘loan forgiveness’ programs

When Vanessa Williams, a 23-year-old State University of New York grad, was offered “loan forgiveness” by a company called SLF Center, she may have thought her \$21,000 in student loan debt was going to be, well, forgiven.

That’s not what happened.

What SLF calls “loan forgiveness” is actually loan consolidation. All of Williams’ student loans were rolled into one mega-loan—which she would still have to pay back—and her interest rate went up, to boot.

The same thing happened to Kory Turner, a 31-year-old Montclair State grad, when he opted for loan forgiveness from Integra. Instead of letting him off the hook on his \$80,000 in student loans, Integra signed him up for temporary forbearance. That just means he didn’t have to make payments for a while, and his interest continued to soar.

Both Turner and Williams paid up to get some relief from their student loans, and instead, they ended up owing more. And the kicker is this: They didn’t have to pay Integra or SLF for any of this stuff. The United States Department of Education offers the same service for free.

Williams and Turner are two of 60,000 or so borrowers in a class action lawsuit against SLF, Integra, and the alleged “mastermind” behind this bait-and-switch: Equitable Acceptance Corporation, a finance company based in Minnetonka.

According to the complaint, Equitable has been working with these companies and something like 40 others to shill \$1,300 “loan forgiveness” programs that usually end up putting the borrower in a worse spot than they were in to begin with—along with a new interest rate of about 21 percent.

Equitable didn’t respond to interview requests, but Daniel Hill, Equitable’s general



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

counsel, told NerdWallet that accusations of “masterminding” a scheme against vulnerable young adults already drowning in student loan debt were “just nonsense.”

A lot of people seem to think there’s something rotten about how Equitable does business. It’s currently under investigation by the Federal Trade Commission, and a litany of borrowers have submitted complaints about the company with the Better Business Bureau and the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau:

“I was scammed by Equitable Acceptance last year,” one reads. “They lied like they were a loan forgiveness company but that’s far from the truth... my loans have not been

forgiven and they keep trying to collect....”

“Equitable Acceptance posed to be working with the U.S. Department of Education to consolidate my student loans... the U.S. Department of Education has informed me that they do not work with [them.]”

“I thought [a company] was related to my current lender... and that’s not the case. [The company] did not disclosed [sic] that their finance company is Equitable Acceptance.”

The New York Legal Assistance Group, which is representing the Williamses and Turners of the world in this suit, is still taking calls from borrowers who think they may have been duped. The hotline number is 212-659-6165.—HANNAH JONES

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GREAT BEER GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

Father Knows Worst

Let's not thank Rep. Jim Knoblach for his service

Imagine a family pulled so tightly around the man of the house that some members grow angry with a daughter for accusing him of touching her inappropriately for more than a decade.

Laura Knoblach says relatives asked her, How could you do this to him? Don't you know your dad's "boss" asked him about this, and that it's "your fault"?

Laura says this is what happened to her not long after she posted her claim to Facebook in 2016 alleging her father, state Rep. Jim Knoblach (R-St. Cloud), had made her physically uncomfortable throughout her young life. She was 21 then, and says the conduct started when she was nine.

"I love my children more than anything, and would never do anything to hurt them," Knoblach said in a written statement to Minnesota Public Radio last month. He added: "[Laura's] allegations are false."

Laura's late-2016 Facebook post held back on details, instead focusing on facing up to life experiences. "I figured I'd be a hypocrite not to share my story," she told Facebook friends, "since I spend so much time encouraging others to own theirs."

Her post soon vanished, though by day's end it was swirling through media outlets, which asked Laura for more details. She demurred. Until last month, when she broke her silence with MPR, offering a detailed account about a severely unpleasant childhood, which she blamed on one of the most powerful men in the state.

As chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Jim has been House Republicans' money mechanic, tasked with looking under the hood and tuning up an already-humming state budget. He's known

as House Speaker Kurt Daudt's "brain" on the budget.

Daudt is the aforementioned "boss," who had to ask Jim about this family situation of his. According to Laura, it was just a few days after she'd posted the claim to social media when her mother, Janet, said the accusation was causing this conflict in Jim's life.

When the issue surfaced at the Capitol, questioners got roughly the same story Knoblach has told reporters: Laura was either inventing or misinterpreting incidents. This was all a misunderstanding, this view Laura took of a "defining part of her relationship with her father," as MPR put it.

The GOP leadership team took Jim at his word, or at least didn't do anything to enact a change.

Knoblach, through his attorney, and then his wife, declined interview requests for this story. Daudt also refused to be interviewed.

As the story was relayed to Laura Knoblach, her dad at least paid Daudt the courtesy of taking his phone call about the matter. That's more than Knoblach offered to St. Cloud police or Sherburne County investigators, who opened a case on Laura's claims in early 2017. Knoblach referred their questions to his lawyer, Susan Gaertner, who denied the accusations.

A couple months later, cops closed the case without criminal charges. A reluctant detective told Laura that what she'd described was "really creepy and not right," as quoted in a case file she gave to MPR, yet didn't "quite rise to the level" of a crime under Minnesota law.

Jim Knoblach was a couple years into a second stint chairing the House's most important committee, and a couple months removed from Kurt Daudt and/or others

asking Knoblach (and/or each other) if he'd inappropriately touched his daughter.

Exasperated and deep in therapy, Laura took the story to MPR in September, collecting and handing off the records of her own police file. Gaertner suggested that her claims might be "politically motivated."

But what "political" points was Laura trying to score in seventh grade? That's around when she started telling people—friends, a youth pastor, and later a Catholic school teacher—stories about her home life, as revealed in police files she shared with MPR: that her father held her in grinding embraces she didn't enjoy; that he climbed into bed with her and put his arms around her; held her and kissed her without her consent. Asked her to sit in his lap.

To MPR, Daudt offered a short, cold statement, which began: "I want to thank Chair Knoblach for his many years of service to the State of Minnesota."

Let's talk about that service. Through his eight non-consecutive terms in the House, Jim Knoblach has exhibited all the warmth of a tax-obsessed, services-cutting calculator.

Knoblach led or backed plans to reject welfare benefits to Minnesotans who'd been in-state 60 days or fewer; to kick 95,000-some poor residents off government insurance; and to kill off domestic-partner benefits for gay state employees, who he worried would merely use it to run scams. (Besides, he wondered: "What about sisters living together?")

On occasion, this human calculator's math spat out errors. Knoblach pitched an extension of the Northstar commuter train to St. Cloud, adding 27 miles to a 40-mile route. He said it would cost no money. Experts with the Met Council ran the numbers, and



Mike Mullen

estimated a \$40 million price tag. At least.

By outward appearances, none of these mistakes planted a seed of doubt in Jim's superiors in the House GOP caucus. Then again, they'd already stood by Jim when he was facing grave charges from a family member.

As Daudt bid Knoblach farewell, he added: "I support [Knoblach's] decision to suspend his re-election campaign to focus on his family."

That'd be the same family where one-fourth of the immediate members say Knoblach crept on her many times over, and others blame a young woman for having the audacity of trying, often and for many years, to make him face consequences.

Daudt's statement makes no mention of the disgusting acts Knoblach is accused of committing, and spares not a single thought for his accuser, not even on the off chance she's not just his friend Jim's crazy, progressive, vengeful daughter. That she might just be a survivor telling a painful truth.

It is a cold, easy, cowardly way of thinking. One that sides with the powerful over the vulnerable, perpetrators over victims, men over women and children. People who think that way shouldn't be in charge of anything. Not even their own house. ☒

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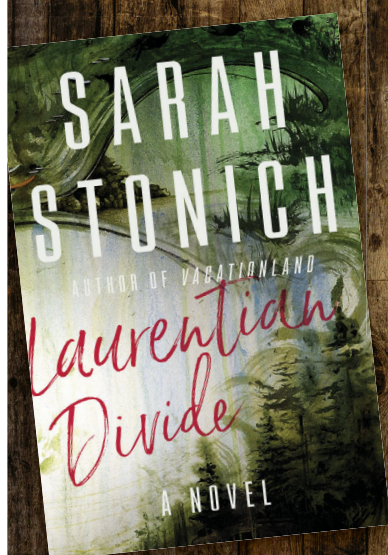
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MINNEAPOLIS



The power of the walk

Five minutes into a walk, I can feel it working.

My shoulder muscles start to melt, my arms hang loose. The tightness that grips between my eyes releases. My feet move like the swinging of a pendulum—steady, propelled by the abiding law that a body in motion stays in motion.

I don't need to read scientific journals to know the power of walking. What mystery could ever be solved without a detective pacing a room, the gears of his brain seemingly turned by the padding of his feet?

Still, science has certainly had its say. A 2014 study showed that walking, particularly outside, “opens the free flow of ideas” and increases creativity. In another, researchers determined that the foot’s impact

during walking significantly modifies and increases the supply of blood to the brain.

When you walk, you are wholly engaged, present, pulsing from toe to head. It’s a motion—one foot in front of the other—so elemental I cannot remember a time when I could not do it.

But I do remember a time before the internet. What was billed as opening up the whole wide world is now a world unto itself. Information and commentary rush so steadily, so constantly, that taking even the briefest pause for reflection feels like standing still in a rising tide.

Before I stroll off into the evening, my day has invariably been reduced to a five-by-three inch electronic patch, from which images and sounds and words appear like magic. Twitter is chirping. Facebook is poking. Yelp is yawping.

So I leave, and it quiets. The online world vanishes; the real world grows bigger, and me smaller within it.

Time slows. Life becomes tangible again. Trees drop their leaves while my dog marks every curb, sending her own signals into the universe. People smile or don’t. I pause at corners, wait for the light to change while cars surge past me in a hurried stream.

I keep walking. —HANNAH SAYLE

how we unplug

7 *ways to escape the roiling seas of modern life*

PHOTO BY LUCY HAWTHORNE

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GLEN STUBBE

Cynic's retreat to the Loring dog park

As an immigrant, I'll always have a misty sentimentality for the nation's better nature. America stands up to bullies. Its leaders are big enough to swallow criticism. Its people respect the quest for a better life that's drawn wind-beaten, storm-battered aspirants from across the globe since the 16th century.

But these days, I'm just not certain that Americans find these to be worthy values.

To retreat from defeatism, I take Shorty the beagle to Loring Park. She walks with her tail up, nose stuck to the ground, floppy ears gathering the neighborhood news to her overactive hound brain.

There's a dog park at the border, behind old oaks. It's a half-block run inlaid with grass, gravel, and a bridge to nowhere.

A half-circle conference of Adirondack chairs is where the humans sit, chattering about the consistency of the Rottweiler's stool and the Frenchie's new diet of boiled chicken and rice. No one talks much about work, as though there's an unspoken rule forbidding it.

Each canine newcomer is greeted with unapologetic enthusiasm. In the ensuing tumble, no one stays on top forever, and no one takes a pinning personally. The variety among dogs in shape, size, and color surpasses the variables among humans, yet no dog ever questions another's doghood.

There are universal rules of play. Humpers always get humped. All toys, no matter how much money was exchanged for them, meet the same end. And everyone knows that if you've come bearing treats, there's no such thing as other people's dogs.

I'm very happy to look and say nothing. I don't even have a name here, as far as anyone can tell, save for Shorty's Mom.

A wooden totem proclaims the law of this land: "The reason why a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail instead of his tongue." —SUSAN DU

In the comforting embrace of the Mall of America

Twitter isn't fun. Not anymore. Logging on long enough to read even one @dril joke means unloading the latest in a miserable barrage of the political (Kavanaugh hearings!), the pop cultural (Louis CK's comeback!), and the personal (that kid you were crushing on has bad opinions!).

But it's too late. I'm an addict. My stupid thumbs spend hours on autopilot, refreshing and refreshing on the off chance they might find a good Elon Musk meme to drop in a group chat.

So when I find myself spiraling blindly into an online K-hole, I do what any reasonable person would do. I go to the Mall of America.

I realize the mall is, like, the physical embodiment of Twitter. I know everyone is supposed to hate it. But powering off my phone for a few hours, wolfing a greasy Auntie Anne's pretzel, telling the high schooler restocking *Rick and Morty* merch at Hot Topic where I got my tattoos—it puts me back in my own 14-year-old mallrat shoes, a time when things were (or weren't, but at least felt) so much simpler.

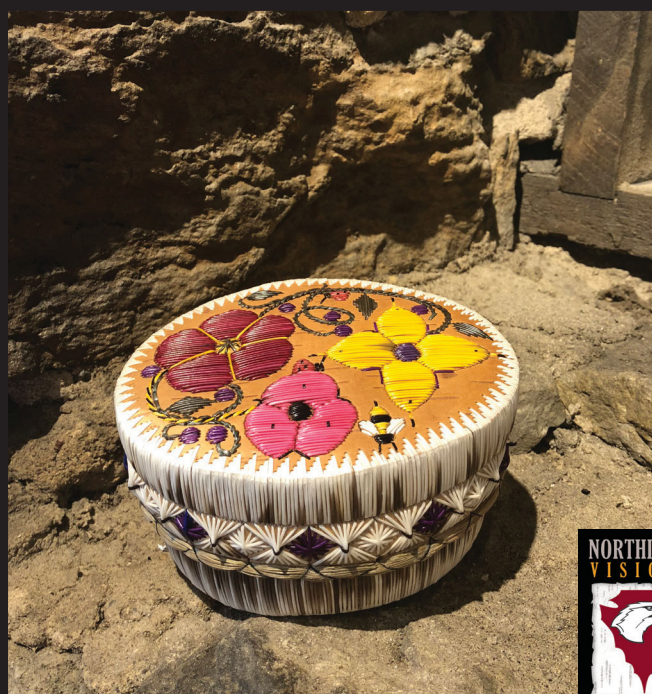
After taking the escalator to Level 4, I work my way down, walking slowly, counterclockwise, around each floor: I pass Hooters and Hollister, Jamba Juice and Journeys, marveling every time at the human yearning for buying enough flat-brimmed caps to support five (5!) different Lids.

I like seeing gaggles of girls smelling Lush bath bombs, eavesdropping on people looking for gifts, and catching the moment a flustered dad finally caves and hands a heaping Coldstone cone to a screaming stroller demon. It's all so damn... human.

Margaritaville. Rainforest Cafe. Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. This is the America I can still relate to if I squint hard enough—a little tacky, a lot over the top, attempting to sell you a \$30 T-shirt on your way out—made manifest in 96 acres of retail and restaurants.

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EMILY UTNE

A new pair of Levi's can't halt climate change. A soft pretzel dipped in cheese won't help Congress pass gun reform. But they can get me out of the mindless scroll cycle long enough to make those things feel urgent and worth caring about again.

The mall reminds me there are people behind the ironic avatars, people who are mostly good, people who sometimes want nothing more than to scream on an indoor roller coaster together.

And honestly? I just really love the Hard Rock Cafe. —EMILY CASSEL

Rescue me, North Shore

The internet was a toxic swamp long before November 2016, but the events of that month cranked the acrimony to 11.

Three months later, I landed a new job as a web editor, which presented a 40-hour-a-week front row seat to the frothing, rabid maw. Now I receive emails with subject lines reading, "Fuck You!" the body offering only scant explanation: "Sent from my iPhone."

This is what it's like to toil within mankind's most debased, deranged, and dehumanizing beast. Though I do enjoy the GIFs and online check-cashing.

Yet for the modest price of five gallons of gas, I can see the Superior National Forest spill off cliffs into the horizon-kissing expanse of Lake Superior. Once hiking boots hit the ground, it's impossible not to feel like Minnesota is harboring some majestic, 150-mile-long secret, as if the glaciers carved us our own chilly Big Sur and the world at large isn't the wiser.

The eight state parks dotting the shore—as well as the Superior Hiking Trail—are egalitarian portals to this magical landscape: gnarled roots looping through beds of pine needles, churning waterfalls, craggy rhyolite outcroppings that jut dramatically out of Superior's three quadrillion gallons (!) of crystalline water.

In this place, it'd be downright sinful to twitchily scroll a smartphone. Thankfully, I'm never tempted.

Waxing Thoreauvian about the North Shore feels semi-vulnerable. At this very moment, I know that someone, somewhere, is about to light me up in the comments section as a "brainless cuck," his insults spiraling upward from there.

That's fine, since I also know the primitive, restorative purity of Gitche Gumee is just 2.5 hours away. —JAY BOLLER

Still life in Como Park

"Oh, look at that."

I glance up. It's a fellow visitor to the Como Park Conservatory, an older man with feathery white hair and thick glasses. He's noticed my sketching.

It's usually older folks or young kids who approach when I'm drawing. Generally speaking, it's a hobby more appreciated by people with time on their hands.

He asks me if I'm an artist. I say no. My job requires keeping up on all news—everything everyone is ever talking about, and some things they aren't. It means I spend most days staring at my phone, trying to read the entire internet.

Think of it as trying to drink an ocean. My girlfriend, my therapist, and I all know that if I continue, I will be a broken-down husk before I'm 30—a person who will never truly care about anything ever again. There's always the worry, the lead brick in my chest, about the crumb I miss.

I do not tell the man at the conservatory any of this. He kindly compliments my work and tells me I should really do something with the sketch when it's done.

What he doesn't understand is that I'm not sketching because the picture has value. I'm sketching because the flowers are beautiful, and drawing them forces me to look at them. It forces me to see something that merely is, and not in a way that is



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consequential or timely or important to anyone who is not in the room.

The world turns, the flowers grow. It is pure, indifferent loveliness.

I have done this before, in front of a Hellenic sculpture of a man beating a centaur to death at the Minneapolis Institute of Art. I have done this in the begonia section at Gertens, on a rainy afternoon at Black Sheep Pizza, and in the 90-degree heat of a backyard on a summer day. The benefit is not in the subject itself, or the drawing. It is in the seeing.

I thank the visitor. He bids me goodbye. In an hour or two, I will finish this piece, and I will feel empty—in a good way.

I will feel as though I have finally seen everything that needs to be seen. Then I'll go home and ask my girlfriend about her day. —HANNAH JONES

This spy's life

As I unwrapped a cherry-red Panasonic tape recorder on my seventh birthday, I knew instantly what it was for: eavesdropping on grown-ups.

Soon, I'd slyly accumulated cassette after cassette of private adult conversation. Even after one tape revealed that I'd be getting a C-3PO model for my eighth birthday—spoiling the surprise and reducing me to disappointed tears—I refused to curb my spying. I needed to hear and know everything—especially everything I wasn't supposed to. I still do.

That is why I will never unplug until the day some nefarious foreign adversary disables our power grid. Or, you know, when I die, I guess.

Wherever I am, in coffee shops or on buses, I can no more tune out strangers' conversations than I can will myself to grow three inches. Knowing this, I put off getting a smartphone for as long as I could. I correctly predicted a future of absolute immersion in social media.

Twitter is a compulsive eavesdropper's dream, as randos willingly divulge their most intimate secrets and most inane opinions. They never stop.

And so my life has become that episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, where a demon wounds Buffy, infecting her with the power to read minds. Her inability to stop overhearing the babble of other people's thoughts starts to drive her insane.

I welcome that insanity. Like every 21st-century adult, I've tried to sanely disengage from technology. This did not make me a person who used his phone less. It just made me a person who felt guilty about not using his phone less.

I've endured cycles of binging and purging. I've attempted to moderate, and I've failed and accepted that failure.

Yes, I realize that my overconsumption is not healthy. But do you realize that no human behavior is healthy? Each of us is an anxiety-generating supercomputer trapped



EMILY UTNE

in a decaying meat cage. No matter how many apps we delete, we will find some way to immiserate ourselves.

My childhood Panasonic abuse didn't kill me. I'll survive my adult Galaxy J7 abuse too.

Or, you know, I won't, I guess.

—KEITH HARRIS

Friendship at the Bryant-Lake Bowl

Nothing good can come from reading online comment sections. I know this. Yet I almost always wade through them, pretending that I will gain some added insight to the story I've just read.

The greater truth: I'm just looking for drama.

I am occasionally the recipient of vitriol: "Omg no one is being racist you weak crybabies."

"This lady needs to shut up already."

"Actually, you don't know what you are talking about, precious snowflake."

On days when I've had enough, I turn off my laptop and head to Bryant-Lake Bowl. Hanging out at a bar offers the chance to briefly connect with strangers, to catch some passing positivity among people enveloped in the warmth of drinks and the freedom of having nothing to do but enjoy yourself.

Sometimes a friend and I play a game where we guess what's going on at other tables. We spot a man and woman one seat over. Their laughter is a little nervous, the conversation eager, and they're holding their beers, not drinking them.

"Blind date? Job interview?" my friend guesses.

The couple doesn't stay long. But they hug and smile sheepishly before leaving.

A man in a Black Lives Matter shirt offers my friend a dollar in exchange for a cigarette.

"I'd like to give you two cigarettes," she says, "because I love your shirt."

He smiles and thanks her. We talk, sharing a genuine moment of kindness before he heads to the bus stop.

Three beers in, a dude sitting alone feels confident enough to put down his book and join our conversation. He's new to the city, and is having a hard time making friends.

"I recently read that, in a moderate-sized city, you could meet someone at a bar," he says, "and it would take you months—maybe even years—before you're likely to run into that person again."

He's probably right. But for this small moment, we have made a precious and necessary friend. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

Marvin Gaye defeats the End of Days

The outrage machine at the fractured heart of America makes the bad news dominating headlines so much worse. National tragedies, political debates (is that redundant?), and even joyous celebrations can all be tainted by the venom.

It can convince anyone that the sky is falling, that the End of Days is near, and that all hope is lost.

My antidote is dropping the needle on Marvin Gaye's *What's Going On*, which begins to melt those fears away as soon as the pulsating groove of the title track kicks in.

The 1971 masterpiece is an anguished reminder of our long history of racism, inequality, and injustice. Yet there is an undercurrent of hope, that a better way forward is possible if everyone is truly heard, seen, and counted.

What's Going On still resonates because the issues Gaye raises so eloquently remain tragically unresolved. Through its profound and poignant 35 minutes, the music tunes out the din of the day, recharging spirit and soul.

When I eventually reconnect with the outside world, I rededicate myself to playing a small part in making it a better place. Gaye's songs give me hope when I need it most, and provide a beacon of light amid the darkness of our time. —ERIK THOMPSON

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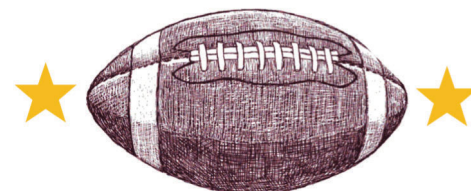
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BY EMILY CASSEL

More people attended the 2018 Minnesota State Fair than ever before, something you might have realized as you shuffled snail-paced down Dan Patch Avenue or waited in an especially epic Sweet Martha's line.

But all we had to do was walk, eat stick foods, and avoid getting heat stroke. Imagine firing up the fryers and serving those record-breaking crowds yourself. Imagine doing it when this is your very first time as a fair vendor.

Now that the dust has settled, the miracles have been birthed, and these brave first-timers have had a month back in business-as-usual mode, we thought we'd ask a few of them to relive the chaos and tell us what they learned.

5. If at first you don't succeed, apply, apply again.

This is the Great Minnesota Get-Together, not the Just-Okay Minnesota Get-Together, and they don't let any old schmuck in. "The State Fair is extremely hard to get into," says Anchor Coffee House co-owner Brad Atkinson, who first submitted a vendor application when Anchor got its start as a mobile coffee cart in 2015. "They're very detail-oriented in how they choose what they choose—it's a very well-run machine."

That means not even Stine Aasland, founder and CEO of Nordic Waffles and Norway's one-time female entrepreneur of the year, was approved right away. "From the moment that I came to the U.S. and I came to Minnesota, people would tell me about the Minnesota State Fair," Aasland says. "That became my dream: One day,

FAIR THEE WELL

5 things you learn as a first-time State Fair vendor



LEE BRANDING

we're going to get into the fair."

That was about three and a half years ago. She'd created a veritable waffle empire in her native country—more than 700 stores stocked her brand—but she points out that number-wise, almost half of Norway's popu-

lation comes to the fair over the course of 12 days. Fair organizers need newbies to prove they can handle that high volume, that they're professional, and that they have a unique product that'll be a hit. (Aasland and co. finally got that chance when they

appeared at Super Bowl Live on Nicollet Avenue earlier this year.)

4. Preparation plus collaboration.

It's not hurry up and wait, it's wait, then hurry up. After trying for years to make it to the fair, Nordic Waffles learned they were in about three months before opening day. Atkinson says Anchor got the official go-ahead one day before the new fair foods were announced.

From there, life becomes an all-out fair-planning frenzy.

"The funny thing that people don't actually see is that there's a lot of buildup time, and then takedown time after," Atkinson explains. "There's a small army behind the scenes that puts things together." His first step was to assemble that army: With a mere six people working at their White Bear Lake shop and four or five more who help out on the trailer in the summer, staffing two shifts a day with 10 people meant hiring about another 40 people.

They also started putting systems in place to streamline service, partnering with the local brewery—which shut down half of its beer production—to mass-produce coldbrew for the first time.

3. Someone here knows more than you.

As a first-timer, you've merely adopted the fair—others were born in it, molded by it. Take Matt Ribar, who's behind Duke's Poutine: His dad, Brad, owns the iconic Corn Roast Stand. "He literally grew up at the fair," Atkinson says.

It made Matt an unbeatable resource for Anchor's crew as they planned their fair debut. The tips they got were crucial—for example, the initial plan was to offer most of their roughly 40-item menu. Ribar's

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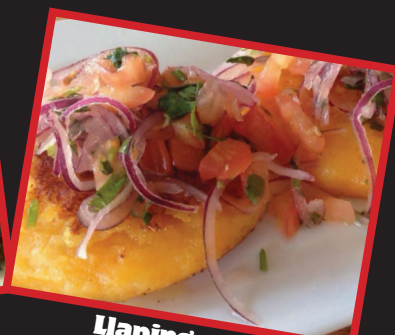
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FOOD

take: There's no way that's going to work. "The fair itself, that network—everybody wants everybody to do well," Atkinson says. "It's kind of its own little family. If you show up and you don't have something, you can very likely turn around and somebody will have it and help you out."

2. The bad news is you're probably never fully ready.

How was Atkinson feeling going into day one? Entirely set, or a little bit, "Well, guess we'll see what happens?"

"Probably a little more of the latter," he admits. "The question was: The systems that we've put in place, that we essentially put on steroids, will they work as smoothly as we think they will?"

There's really no way to know. Because the fair vets rookies carefully, there aren't a lot of historical catastrophes, and in Anchor's case, it was pretty smooth sailing. But in talking to other vendors, he did hear a few near-horror stories. Sara Hayden of Sara's Topsy Pies told Atkinson they'd sell out of all of their product in a day, which meant staying up all night, every night, getting things ready for the next morning.

Sara's scenario has to feel at least a little relatable to the Nordic Waffles crew—looking at their line, you'd have thought people were queuing up for Beatles tickets. "What happened at the fair was way beyond our imagination... we never expected those sort of sales," Aasland says. "We cooked waffles as fast as we could, but I think at one point we had 400 people in line."

It wasn't as miserable as it sounds: "I've always been impressed—Americans are good at being in line because you're a very social people, you talk to each other and you have fun."

1. It's going to be okay. No, really.

"It might not be the Picasso you planned on, but you're gonna have something out there," Atkinson says of the year one experience. Things weren't perfect this time around—they didn't have a canopy ready, for example, and this was a rainy fair—but overall his biggest surprise was that things went as well as they did.

"We learned a lot about the operation and how we can maximize even more, everything from education about the waffles to menu changes," adds Aasland. They'll make one big switch that'll interest anyone who wants a look at the fair from the vendor side: hiring someone to oversee their fair operation.

"For us, it's a full-time position. If anybody out there wants to operate it, we are looking for that person," Aasland laughs, before adding: "I'm throwing a job opening into this interview." ☐

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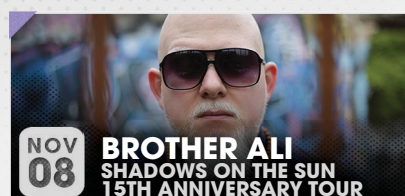
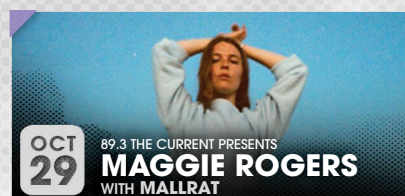
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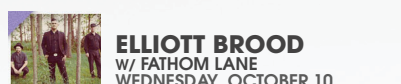
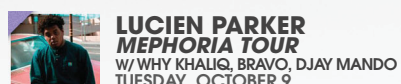
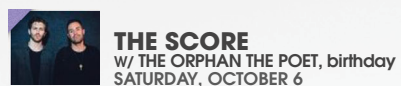
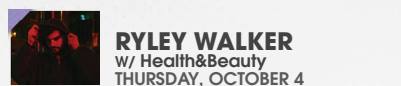
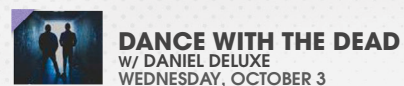
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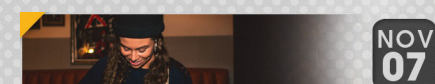
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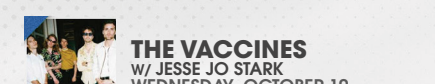
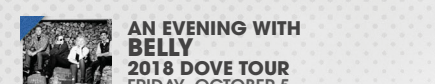
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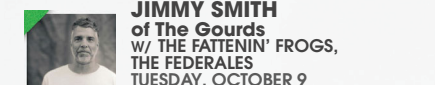
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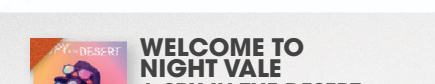
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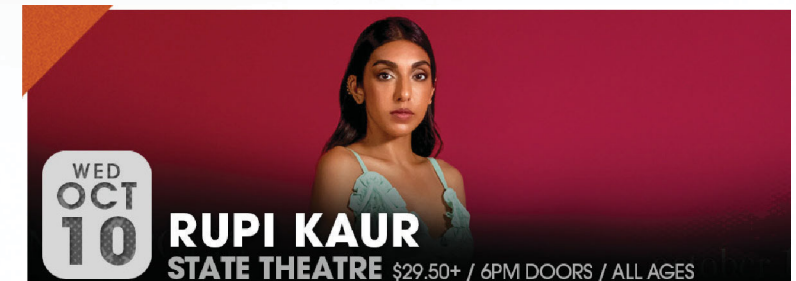
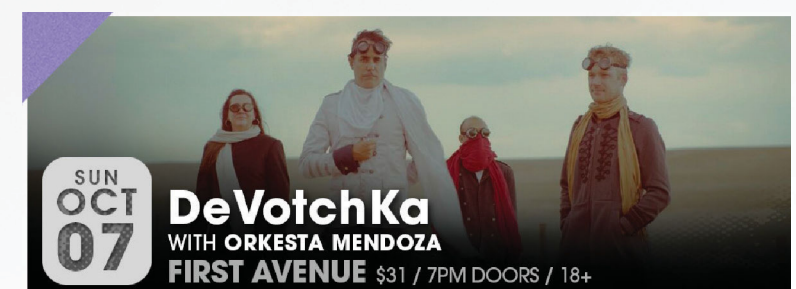
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Trademark Theater, run by two Tylers, is one of the Twin Cities' highest-profile new company launches in recent years. Tyler Michaels is an actor and director whose star has been rising since he was handed the Emerging Artist Ivey Award in 2014. Tyler Mills is a writer known for acclaimed Fringe shows. Though the company's debut production, last year's *The Boy & Robin Hood*, was underwhelming, this fall's production of *Understood* is a very different endeavor. Written by Mills and directed by Michaels, *Understood* comes billed as a surreal two-hander about a young married couple whose relationship has become strained. The disappearance of their dog sends them on a journey staged at Soma Studios, a new art space in the Grain Belt building. Michaels says in a statement that he hopes the production will help facilitate "difficult but necessary conversations" about personal and political differences as the midterm elections approach. It's a worthy, if daunting, aim. Find tickets and more info at www.trademarktheater.org; 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays; 2 p.m. Sundays. \$20; \$15 students. 79 13th Ave. NE, studio 212 at Grain Belt Studios, Minneapolis; 701-739-5828. **Through October 28** —JAY GABLER

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DAVID LIEBE HART

NOMAD WORLD PUB

If we're being honest, we have no clue what to tell you when it comes to this week's David Liebe Hart show at the Nomad. Surely there will be songs, puppets, videos, and stories, but, quite frankly, there's no telling what Liebe Hart might do or say. Best known as part of *Tim & Eric's Awesome Show, Great Job!*, Liebe Hart is an actor, musician, painter, and puppeteer. He also claims to have communicated with aliens, and



Indigenous art from India takes a trip to the Weisman Art Museum.

MAYANK SHYAM, ORIGIN OF LIFE

has an intense love of model trains. His new show features a three-piece backing band, giving him more tools to paint a delightfully bizarre and occasionally confusing live experience. Whether he's performing "hits" like "Salame" or "Puberty," ranting about trains, or giving what can only be described as a fever-induced TED Talk about ghosts and religion, the one thing we can guarantee is that Liebe Hart is incapable of phoning in a subpar or uninspired performance. Super fans and curious bystanders alike will not forget this show anytime soon. 21+. 8 p.m. \$10/\$12 at the door. 501 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis; 612-338-6424. —PATRICK STRAIT

DANCE

BALLET HISPANICO

NORTHROP

The venerable and vivacious Ballet Hispánico, founded in 1970 by Tina Ramirez, makes its Northrop debut

(and opens this year's Northrop dance season) with a program by Latina choreographers. They may not be household names yet, but their work is indelible. In "Con Brazos Abiertos," the dancers animate choreographer Michelle Manzanales' narrative about navigating the worlds of Mexico and the United States while growing up in Texas. Belgian-Colombian dance maker Annabelle Lopez Ochoa's "Sombbreroísimo" focuses on the company's male dancers, who move with sensual and technical ferocity. In "3. Catorce Dieciséis," by Tania Pérez-Salas, the circularity of life and pi are explored. Now under the direction of Eduardo Vilaro, the company continues its trajectory from dance school and community-based troupe to dance company of international acclaim—all while staying close to its roots. 7:30 p.m. \$29-\$47. 84 Church St. SE, Minneapolis; 612-624-2345. —CAMILLE LEFEVRE

FESTIVAL

MINNEAPOLIS BURLESQUE FESTIVAL

LAB THEATER

This weekend, artists from around the globe will be in town to shimmy, seduce, and strip on the Lab's stage. Each evening will feature a special lineup showcasing the talents of a variety of performers. Headlining artists include Coco Lectric (Austin), Ray Gunn (Chicago), and Lola Frost (Vancouver), with local efforts from the likes of Nadine DuBois, Musette, RedBone, and Elektra Cute. Half the fun of reading through burlesque press releases is going through the names, so here are a few of our faves: Po' Chop, Iron Fanny & Whiskey Wow Wow, Spikey van Dykey, and Muff Jones. Nice jobs, ladies and gents. Overall, 100-plus entertainers will take the stage this weekend, with the crew heading over to LUSH for a grand finale on Sunday. Classes and

workshops will also be available; find more info at www.thelabtheater.org. All ages. 7 p.m. Thursday; 6 and 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 6 p.m. Sunday at LUSH. \$25-\$30; \$40-\$50 VIP; \$130-\$200 weekend pass. 700 First St. N., Minneapolis; 612-333-3377. **Through Sunday** —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

DANCE

MEREDITH MONK & VOCAL ENSEMBLE: CELLULAR SONGS

WALKER ART CENTER

Meredith Monk has long been uncategorizable. A vocalist, composer, choreographer, theater artist, and mover, she's most of all a visionary whose works at once transport us to a primal past and an irrepressible future. In this large-scale theater piece, her first in more than a decade, she and her chorus of women move and sing to a film and video installation in an exploration of environmental devastation and resilience. While the work's essence lies in the details, and Monk's approach to exploring the microscopic in her singular way, the overall experience will be cosmic: aural, kinetic, and mind-blowingly transformative. 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday. \$28. 725 Vineland Place, Minneapolis; 612-375-7600. **Through Saturday** —CAMILLE LEFEVRE

FRIDAY 10.5

ART

MANY VISIONS, MANY VERSIONS: ART FROM INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN INDIA

FREDERICK R. WEISMAN ART MUSEUM

Among India's many indigenous art traditions, the Pardhans of Gond and the wall works of the Warli (Central India), ritualistic and religious pieces by women in Mithila region (Bihar), and the Bengal scroll painters are among the best known. In this remarkable exhibition, works both archival and contemporary have been curated from private collections around the world, revealing the tremendous breadth of cultural traditions in India, and their relevance from domestic to global concerns. Our own Ragamala Dance Company opens the exhibition party with Sacred Earth, a gorgeous work of poetic movement exploring human emotion and the natural world. The preview party on Friday, October 5, from 7 to 10 p.m. also features music by DJ Chamun. Free; register online for the preview reception. 333 E. River Rd., Minneapolis; 612-625-9494. **Through January 6, 2019** —CAMILLE LEFEVRE

FRIDAY

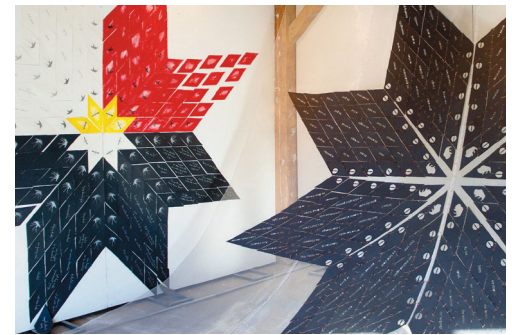
ART/GALLERY

RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS: UNDERSTANDING MITÁKUYE OYÁS'IN

PUBLIC FUNCTIONARY

Inclusiveness means different things to different people: Embedded in the word, in fact, is often a sense of exclusivity.

So when the Lakota say "mitákuye oyás'in," what do they mean? The phrase translates to "we are all related" or "all my relatives." Given the sensibility and worldview of the Lakota, and Lakota women in particular, "we" and "relatives" encompass far more than what may be considered human. This exhibition includes two-dimension explorations of mitákuye oyás'in's meaning, as well as video and multimedia installations, by Mary V. Bordeaux, Clementine Bordeaux, and Layli Long Soldier. The opening reception on Friday, October 5, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. will feature an artists' talk. 1400 12th Ave. NE (enter through loading dock on Buchanan), Minneapolis. **Through October 14** —CAMILLE LEFEVRE



COURTESY EVENT ORGANIZERS

HALLOWEEN

THE HAUNTED BASEMENT 12

THE HAUNTED BASEMENT

The Haunted Basement retains a unique niche as the Halloween experience for discerning scare-seekers, those looking for something more creative than just masked movie villains jumping wearily from behind doors. For its second year

in its post-Soap Factory space, the Basement is moving to a system where a new director helms the horrors each year. This year's dungeon master is Paul von Stoetzel, a filmmaker and theater artist who promises to take the popular October destination in a dystopian direction. "This year our intention is to truly fuck with those who have the sand to step into the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23 ►

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A-LIST

CONTINUED FROM FRIDAY ►

basement,” he says. “Our intent is to inspire a true dread that patrons didn’t know we could accomplish. We want patrons to physically enter a ghoulish world which they both are fascinated and subsequently horrified by the worst monsters imaginable—desperate human beings.” In other words, don’t expect last year’s undead Betty Crocker to make a comeback. 18+. Schedule a time at HauntedBasement.org. \$25–\$27; \$40 blind invocations tickets. 2010 E. Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis; 612-444-2191. **Through October 31** —JAY GABLER

COMEDY

HEATHER MCDONALD

RICK BRONSON’S HOUSE OF COMEDY

At USC, jaded a bit by growing up in L.A., Heather McDonald decided not to major in theater. Still, she performed whenever she had the chance while also taking a few theater classes as electives. “When I graduated, I realized I shouldn’t deny that this was my passion.” She began taking classes at the Groundlings, where she also began to write. Concurrent to that she started doing standup. Her first professional writing gig was on Keenan Ivory Wayans’ late night talk show. She went on to be a writer and panelist for *Chelsea Lately*, and has written two books. Turns out she chose the right course. “I knew there were a lot of actresses out there,” she says, “but I realized I had this gift for comedy that not everyone has, and for doing impressions and characters. I knew that I should start to pursue that because I could stand out as opposed to being the brunette girl who gets one line on *Friends*.” 16+. 7:30 and 9:45 p.m. Friday; 7 and 9:30 p.m. Saturday. \$26.95. 408 E. Broadway, Mall of America, Bloomington; 952-858-8558. **Through Saturday** —P.F. WILSON

SATURDAY 10.6

BEER

HULLABALOO 2018

INDEED BREWING

Forget the lederhosen, boot-shaped glasses, and pumpkin spice beers for a minute. Indeed celebrates fall in an entirely different way. Hullabaloo’s musical lineup is stacked, with soul/funk collective Astralblak headlining Saturday, plus hip-hop/sound artists Kill the Vultures, Americana group Them Coulee Boys, R&B vocalist Lady Midnight, and many others taking the stage this weekend. The Northeast brewery promises a wide selection of pints from

Gargoyles and other beasts haunt “Gods & Monsters.”

its Wooden Soul series (barrel-aged sours), fall-minded beers like Stir Crazy Porter and Zwickelbier, and the one-time return of retired sweet potato seasonal ale Yamma Jamma. Blue Door Pub and Aki’s BreadHaus will provide sustenance to keep the party going all weekend long, and Chuck U, who does all of Indeed’s art, will be creating work live. All ages. Noon to 11 p.m. Saturday; noon to 8 p.m. Sunday. Free; \$1 drinking wristband. 711 15th Ave. NE, Minneapolis; 612-843-5090. **Through Sunday** —LOREN GREEN

ART/GALLERY

MORE EXTRA LAVISH: PAINTINGS, PRINTS, AND GRAPHIC ARTIFACTS FROM MIKE DAVIS

CO EXHIBITIONS

While you might not be familiar with Mike Davis, you are likely to be familiar with his work. Since moving to Minneapolis in 2003, the Nashville native has created a variety of gig posters, including pieces for Bonnaroo, Umphrey’s McGee, and Snoop Dogg. He’s a co-founder of Burlesque of North America, and his designs can be seen on beer cans (he worked on the label for Har Mar Superstar’s collab with Modist Brewing), on T-shirts (his Prince tribute is particularly special), and on the “Refugees Welcome” stickers and signs that have been popping up in business windows around town. His work draws



ELI LIBSON

from a variety of sources, including busy Richard Scarry children’s books, trippy ’70s blacklight posters, and local pro wrestlers. This Saturday, he’ll be hosting his first solo show at CO Exhibitions, where you can check out 25 years’ worth of creative ephemera, including test prints, projects, posters, and new works. There will be an opening reception on Saturday, October 6, from 6 to 10 p.m., with music from DJ Nak and Jimmy 2 Times. 1101 Stinson Blvd., Minneapolis; 612-379-4151. **Through November 9** —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

THEATER

TWO DEGREES

GUTHRIE THEATER

While a rise of two degrees on a household thermostat would be scarcely noticeable, climate scientists have warned that the same amount of warming measured on a global scale would be disastrous. Contemporary playwright Tira Palmquist’s latest work, *Two Degrees*, follows the efforts of Emma Phelps, a dedicated paleoclimatologist who ventures to Washington, D.C. in an effort to oppose measures that would further erode the environment. Without shying away from the disturbing scientific evidence, the timely drama recognizes that policymaking is an endeavor wrought with human folly, having as much to do with career ambitions as public wellbeing. The standout cast includes Norah Long as Emma, with a

supporting cast of Jennifer Whitlock, Toussaint Morrison, and Joel Liestman. This Shelli Place-directed staging marks the second season for Prime Productions, an organization committed to cultivating roles for women over 50. The show is in previews on Friday, October 5. 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays; some 1 p.m. shows on Saturdays and Sundays. \$9. 818 S. Second St., Minneapolis; 612-377-2224. **Through October 21** —BRAD RICHASON

ART/GALLERY

GODS & MONSTERS 2018 SHOW

ARTSPACE JACKSON FLATS

This month at Artspace, the Otherworldly Arts Collective helps folks get into the Halloween spirit with a group show of works inspired by mythologies, horror flicks, nightmares, and other spooky specters. No matter what creeps you out, you’ll probably find it here; there will be over 100 pieces on display. There are tributes to horror maven Vincent Price, odes to vampires ranging from ancient to sexy, and odd creatures, including furry trout and demonic sheep. The opening reception from 6 to 11 p.m. Saturday, October 6, will feature tarot readings, tunes by DJ Hyperkarma of the Gothess Collective, items to peruse from Studio Payne’s Curiosity shop, and eats from Butcher Salt food truck. Costumes are encouraged. Free; \$2 suggested donation. 901 18 1/2 Ave. NE, Minneapolis; 612-333-9012. **Through October 27** —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

MONDAY 10.8

ART

GOETHE IN THE SKYWAYS

CITY CENTER, SKYWAY LEVEL

The Minneapolis skyway system—the longest and most intricate in the world—becomes the site of artistic intervention and political discourse over the next 12 months. Sandra Teitge, who organizes exhibitions in such unlikely places as boats and apartments, is the instigator here. The 30th anniversary of the Berlin Wall’s fall has inspired the ongoing project, as have global migration and the rise of the new right in Europe and the U.S. How will these topics converge in the skyways? Teitge has invited artists to weigh in via their preferred media, which includes posters, concerts, workshops, walks, spoken word, and movement performances. There will be a soft launch Monday, October 8, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Find more info at goetheintheskyways.org. 40 S. Seventh St., Ste. 208, Minneapolis. **Through September 2019** —CAMILLE LEFEVRE



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FILM

BORN AGAIN

Pop conquers all and the future is female in *A Star Is Born*



WARNER BROS.

BY KEITH HARRIS

“It’s the same story told over and over,” Sam Elliott muses near the end of *A Star Is Born*, rumbling as always like the wisest of creaky floorboards. He’s talking about music, how every song just rearranges a finite set of 12 notes, but he could as well be describing the movie itself. Bradley Cooper’s directorial debut is the fourth film to call itself *A Star Is Born*, and countless others have recycled some version of its plot of a rising female star eclipsing her doomed, drunken male lover. With a tune that familiar, you’ve got to hit all the right notes. Both Cooper and his glam co-star Lady Gaga come pretty damn close.

The boy-meets-girl setup of the first act is flawless. After drinking and drugging his way through another show, Cooper’s Jackson Maine staggers into a drag bar where Gaga’s Ally enraptures him with a performance of “La Vie en Rose.” They head to an after-hours spot where she starts a brawl and gets socked, he buys frozen

peas at a supermarket for the swelling, and they sit on a curb and discuss art and fame till dawn. Soon Jack’s whisking Ally off on his private jet and cajoling her onstage to perform a song she wrote; when Gaga launches into her upper register, her eyes widen like Peter Parker discovering he can shoot webs.

Romantic movies ask a lot of us, often just shoving two attractive celebrities toward one another and demanding our credulity. But Cooper’s low-key charm and Gaga’s adorable old-Hollywood everygal quality match perfectly, and they know just how to look at each other to convince us they’re both seeing someone who has improbably and immediately changed their lives.

As a director, Cooper has an innate sense of pacing—the movie flows from one scene to the next without indulging in my-tracking-shot-is-longer-than-yours bluster, and his camera creates intimacy without any faux documentary pretensions. And in ace supporting performances, Dave Chappelle (as Jack’s old Memphis pal) and Andrew Dice Clay (as Ally’s father) each offer unlikely gravitas.

Though Jack has his reservations about Ally’s makeover into a pop star, the film doesn’t. *A Star Is Born* may be the sort of movie where characters insist that genuine art comes from the soul, but its soundtrack is wiser to the ways of showbiz. When it’s time for your tears, Gaga clobbers you with an expertly crafted schlock ballad. What Ally learned from the drag queens is the message of pop generally: The essence of stardom is less self-expression than self-reinvention.

That’s hardly a lesson some tired old rock and roller can learn. If Jack’s backstory feels sketched in after the fact, and the interaction with Elliot as his older brother feels particularly forced, that’s because Jack’s inevitable downfall

is rooted in something more elemental. “Maybe it’s time to let the old ways die,” he groans on his fatalistic signature tune. But since he embodies a masculinity too brittle to adapt to change, he’s got to die with them. **C+**

A STAR IS BORN

directed by Bradley Cooper
area theaters, starts Friday



TONY NELSON

THE VISIT

Frank Theatre's 30th season travels to St. Paul

BY JAY GABLER

Frank Theatre has been working for years to stage Friedrich Dürrenmatt's *The Visit* (1956), but when the long-awaited show opened on Friday night it felt so extraordinarily timely, audience members gasped at lines that could have come straight from Twitter. That sounds like a good thing. It might not be.

Regardless of timing, the strong production is a reminder of why audiences have supported Wendy Knox's scrappy and ambitious company for three decades. *The Visit* is a fine example of Knox's work mounting intelligent but accessible shows, often in unusual venues.

Located in St. Paul's historic Jackson Street Roundhouse, the Minnesota Transportation Museum serves as a repository for numerous train cars that Frank audiences are encouraged to explore during intermission. It looks and smells like the depot it is, perfect for a story that centers on momentous comings and goings at a small-town train station.

The titular "visit" is actually a homecoming for Claire Zachanassian (Katherine Ferrand), a fabulously wealthy woman who grew up in the town of Güllen. Local residents hope that Claire will invest in the failing local industries and revitalize the economy; she in fact promises to do so, but her seeming generosity comes with some strings attached. Those strings lead threateningly to Anton (Mark Rhein), the

THE VISIT

Minnesota Transportation Museum
193 Pennsylvania Ave. E., St. Paul
Through October 21; 612-724-3760

beau of her youth, who's now settled down as a married shopkeeper.

In the high Brechtian style that's a Frank specialty, *The Visit* is an eerily surreal spectacle—particularly at night, with empty trains stretching away into the darkness behind weird characters like the blind, keening duo of Koby (Mohamed Yabdri) and Lobby (Gabriel Murphy).

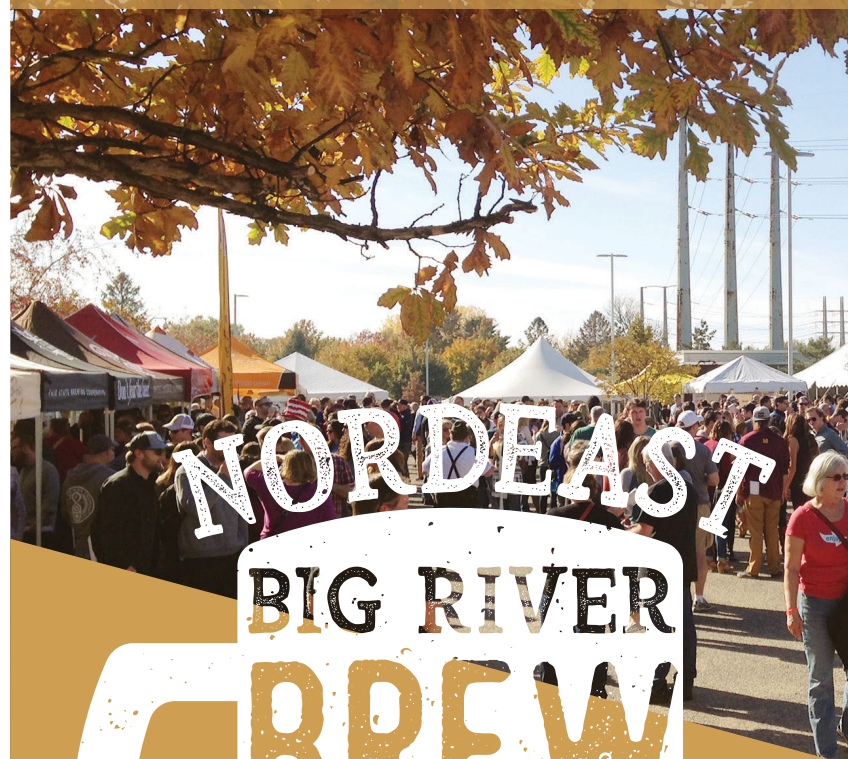
Wardrobe plays a starring role in *The Visit*: Anticipating that Claire's conditions will be fulfilled, townspeople start buying expensive clothes on credit, an ominous development for Anton given what the visitor has in mind for him. The stunning work of costume designer Kathy Kohl is reason enough to see this production.

Ferrand and Rhein are both good, although they miss opportunities to evoke the long-roiling emotions at the dark heart of their affair. This *Visit* is really about the townspeople, and it's there that Knox shines with her sprawling cast. Among the stand-outs are Gary Briggie as a dithering mayor; Carl Schoenborn as an imposing butler; and Allison Witham and Sulia Rose Altenberg as Anton's humorously impatient children.

Anton has severely wronged Claire, Dürrenmatt establishes, yet the play also questions whether Claire goes too far in bringing the full fury of the town upon Anton's head. If public outcry over youthful abuse actually sounds pretty damn justified to you right now, you may need to wash *The Visit* down with Mixed Blood's cathartic *Is God Is*. Dürrenmatt's play wraps male privilege into a moral puzzle, but this production arrives at a time when the wrapping might just need to come off. **C**

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JONAH MATRANGA
OCT 24



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W/ WITHER THE TIDE & DEPOTEK
OCT 25



MELODIME
W/ THE BREVET
OCT 28



SAY WE CAN FLY
A SUMMER HIGH
OCT 28



ESSEKS
W/ FRO NCY & MINDSET
NOV 02



BIG GIGANTIC
W/ FLAMINGOSIS
NOV 03



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NOV 06



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NOV 07



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W/ ZEKE BEATS
NOV 08



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NOV 09



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W/ THE ACACIA STRAIN
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MOODY GOOD
NOV 10



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LSDREAM
(BRILLZ ALIAS) W/ KAYOH
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20TH ANNIVERSARY SHOW
NOV 17



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NOV 18



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KPW

34, HIP-HOP ARTIST

What are you wearing?

West African dashiki, slim fit/stressed jeans, Timberland Gortex boots, and gold chain/Nefertiti pendant.

Describe your style:

My style is influenced heavily by the Golden Era.

What is the most essential item in your wardrobe?

My Nefertiti pendant. No matter what I have on, it is always around my neck and reminds me of many important sentiments.



ASHLEY LACAYO

27, MICROBIOLOGIST

What are you wearing?

I'm wearing a cardigan from Necessary Clothing, crop top from Unique Thrift Store, wide-leg pants from I.N.C., and Guess shoes. Jewelry is one earring from a local co-op, the other from a local artist.

Describe your style:

My style is mismatched, shiny, and funky.

What is the most essential item in your wardrobe?

A subtle flair, like loud earrings, a pizza ring, or a colorful pin.



ZEAM PORTER

20, STUDENT

What are you wearing?

Jumpsuit from Everyday People, scarf from a beauty supply store in St. Paul. My Prince-inspired heels are from K&G.

Describe your style:

Typically my style ranges from the '70s to the '90s. I wear a lot of funky patterns, pleated pants, billowing shirts, and head scarves. I like to modernize the look with my hair, from colorful yarn twists to braids.

What is the most essential item in your wardrobe?

My classic jean jacket. Call me clichéd, but it's how I signify I'm queer, cool, and down to earth.

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ZOE PRINDS-FLASH

JUST IN TIME

Tiny Deaths navigate our perilous present moment on their new record, *Magic*

BY ERIK THOMPSON

They say long-distance relationships never work out. But don't tell that to Tiny Deaths.

The five-year creative partnership between singer/songwriter Claire de Lune and Brooklyn-based producer Grant Cutler has always crossed multiple state lines. Now it's truly a bi-coastal arrangement, following de Lune's move from Minneapolis to Los Angeles last year.

"I was really itching for an adventure, a change of pace," de Lune says over Sunday brunch, back home rehearsing for her upcoming tour. "I wanted to shake things up a bit. Some people can just find that drive within themselves to push themselves to grow and challenge themselves. But for me, sometimes it's helpful to have the world pushing you. L.A. is hard. It's a hard city to live in. It's expensive. It's huge. It's forced me to go within my inner reserves of strength, and that always creates growth. I think I've become more sure of myself and stronger. I feel like I've grown up a lot in a year."

That confidence and growth is evident on *Magic*, Tiny Deaths' new record. Though recorded in Minneapolis at Humans Win! Studios in the summer of 2017, before de

Lune's move, it pulses with restless energy, the diaphanous electropop of the band's earlier work now both more refined and more propulsive, and de Lune's lyrics more expansive and empathetic than ever.

"This is the first time that I've written a record that is not predominantly about relationships," de Lune says. "Historically, I've just been more inspired by love and relationships. But on this record, I wrote about a lot of other things. There's no way that after the election, and after some of the experiences that I had with the Black Lives Matter movement and the #MeToo movement—unless you're consciously trying to avoid it, I just don't think it's possible to be an empathetic person and not have that inform what you are inspired to write about."

The simmering opener "Us" calls out those who build walls around themselves, hiding from the unfamiliar and failing to recognize the humanity in others, and the title track captures what it's like to be young during apocalyptic times. De Lune wrote the elegantly fragile "Stop the Stars" about an emotional moment in a bar late on election night 2016, as she watched the

results terrify a family of undocumented immigrants who worked in the kitchen.

"All the boundaries just fell down that night," de Lune says. "It was this thing where we're all in this together. It felt apocalyptic, and all the rules about what was considered normal had gone out the window. I just went up to the dad and hugged him, and he fell into my arms and started crying on my shoulder. I was just holding him and telling him that everything was going to be OK, and in my heart I didn't know if I believed it. But I just felt like that's what he needed at that moment. It was two strangers offering comfort to each other, and I wanted everything to be OK for him so bad. That song is about that experience with him, really wanting to protect him from the evils of the world—and not really understanding how people can be so cruel and be so dismissive of other human lives."

The remote creative camaraderie that de Lune and Cutler share plays to the strengths and artistic traits of the duo. Cutler remains a silent partner who is most comfortable behind the scenes, while de Lune has taken on the responsibility of marketing, booking, and managing the band after they parted ways with their management team.

"The whole idea of this band was that everyone does what they want to do and what they are good at," de Lune says. "I love performing live, and I like talking about our music, and I'm fine being the face of our band. Grant just really wants to be holed up in his studio making music, and never talking to humans and never seeing them. So, I go out and present our music to the world, whether it's talking about it or performing it, and he stays hidden and safe in his little lair and just makes really beautiful music."

Cutler's textured, electronic arrangements for *Magic* are moody, dynamic, and evocative, while also spare enough for de Lune's vocals to shine through, and for the first time, they worked with an outside recording engineer, Brett Bullion.

"That was really interesting because we really know our sound, but he [Bullion] obviously didn't, because he's new to us," de Lune explains. "Having to explain to someone what about you makes you you, in order to get that sound out of them, really makes things more clear. It makes you feel more sure about your identity as an artist, versus just intuiting it yourself—to have to be able to put into words for another person that this is the type of sound we are, and this is what makes us us."

The mixing process wasn't completely



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smooth at first. "We ended up using the word 'feminine' a lot, like 'feminine energy,' as feedback for Brett," says de Lune. "It wasn't quite right, the first round of mixes that we got. I couldn't quite put my finger on it. I said to Grant, 'What is it about this that feels so...' and he said, 'masculine.' And that was totally it. That's not us. This project has such a feminine energy. I never would have thought to put it in those terms or think of it in that context if we weren't trying to find ways to explain to someone else how to get closer to what we sound like."

De Lune is more proud of *Magic* than anything else she's made in her career. "Call me old-fashioned, but I love albums," says de Lune. "It's the closest I'll get to making a film. It's a fully realized piece of art. An album really gives you a chance to say

something, to make something that is like a moment in time and really self-contained. I

think it takes you a few songs to find out who you are in that moment. When I look back on this record and this moment in time, I'll see that yeah, that's me in my late 20s navigating the world. And it's a crazy time, for me personally and for the world—and it took me a few songs to work through that." **CF**

CRITICS' PICKS

BELLY

FINE LINE MUSIC CAFE, FRIDAY 10.5
Belly's first go-round didn't last long past the '90s alt-rock boom; the band appeared on the cover of Rolling Stone in 1995 and broke up the next year. In 2016, Tanya Donelly (ex-Throwing Muses and -Breeders) and the other members of the same lineup Belly left off with revealed they were reuniting. This May, they released their third album and first in 23 years, *Dove*, a successful reboot of their sparkly dream-pop with touches of country-rock. 18+. 9 p.m. \$20-\$35. 318 First Ave. N., Minneapolis; 612-338-8100. —MICHAEL MADDEN

WIZKID

SKYWAY THEATRE, SATURDAY 10.6
Wizkid was already a star in Africa when Drake and grime MC Skepta remixed his "Ojuelegba" in 2014. The Nigerian singer's major-label debut, *Sounds from the Other Side*, taps stars and styles from across the Atlantic, including Drake and Chris Brown. But while fellow Nigerian star Davido condemned Wizkid for the crossover moves, the album is still loyal to the energy of Afrobeat and even weaves in a couple Fela Kuti samples. 9 p.m. \$60-\$80. 711 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis; 612-333-6100. —MICHAEL MADDEN

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

>> By Rob Breznysy

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19): *Electra* is an action-packed story written by ancient Greek playwright Sophocles. It features epic characters taking drastic action in response to extreme events. In contrast to that text is Marcel Proust's novel *In Search of Lost Time*, which draws from the sensitive author's experiences growing up, coming of age, and falling in love, all the while in quest for meaning and beauty. Author Virginia Woolf compared the two works, writing, "In six pages of Proust we can find more complicated and varied emotions than in the whole of the *Electra*." In accordance with astrological omens, I recommend that you specialize in the Proustian mode rather than the Sophoclean. Your feelings in the next five weeks could be as rich and interesting and educational as they have been in a long time. Honor them!

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Researchers in Maryland have created a new building material with a strength-to-weight ratio that's eight times better than steel. It's an effective insulator, and in some forms can be bent and folded. Best of all, it's biodegradable and cost-effective. The stuff is called nanowood, and is derived from lightweight, fast-growing trees like balsa. I propose that we make it your main metaphor for the foreseeable future. Why? Because I think you're primed to locate or create your own version of a flexible, durable, robust building block

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20): The U.S. Secretary of Defense paid an official visit to Indonesia early this year. The government arranged for him to observe soldiers as they demonstrated how tough and well-trained they were. Some of the troops shimmied through broken glass, demolished bricks with their heads, walked through fire, and bit heads off snakes. I hope you won't try stunts like that in the coming weeks, Gemini. It will be a favorable time for you show off your skills and make strong impressions. You'll be wise to impress important people with how creative and resourceful you are. But there's no need to try too hard or resort to exaggeration

♋ CANCER (June 21-July 22): I confess that I have a fuzzy self-image. With odd regularity, I don't seem to know exactly what or who I am. For example, I sometimes think I'm so nice and polite that I need to toughen up. But on other occasions I feel my views are so outrageous and controversial that I should tone myself down. Which is true? Often, I even neglect to capitalize the word "I." You have probably experienced some of this fuzziness, my fellow Cancerian. But you're now in a favorable phase to cultivate a more definitive self-image. Here's a helpful tip: We Cancerians have a natural talent for inspiring people to love us. This ability will come in especially handy as we work on making an enduring upgrade from I to I. Our allies' support and feedback will fuel our inner efforts to clarify our identity.

♌ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): "I am a little afraid of love, it makes me rather stupid." So said author Simone de Beauvoir in a letter she wrote to her lover, Nelson Algren. I'm happy to let you know, Leo, that during the next twelve months, love is likely to have the opposite effect on you. According to my analysis of the astrological omens, it will tend to make you smarter and more perceptive. To the degree that you expand your capacity for love, you will become more resilient and a better decision-maker. As you get the chance to express love with utmost skill and artistry, you will awaken dormant potentials and boost your personal power.

♍ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Your theme in the coming weeks is the art of attending to details. But wait! I said "the art." That means attending to details with panache, not with overly meticulous fussing. For inspiration, meditate on St. Francis Xavier's advice, "Be great in little things." And let's take his thought a step further with a quote from author Richard Shivers: "Be great in little things, and you will be given opportunity to do big things." Novelist Tom Robbins provides us with one more nudge: "When we accept small wonders, we qualify ourselves to imagine great wonders."

♎ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Libran astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson offers this observation: "When you look for things in life like love, meaning, motivation, it implies they are sitting behind a tree or under a rock. [But] the most successful people in life recognize that in life they create their own love, they manufacture their own meaning, they generate their own motivation." I think Tyson's simple wisdom is exactly what you need to hear right now, Libra. You're primed for a breakthrough in your ability to create your own fate.

♏ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Japanese entrepreneur Hiroki Terai has created a business that offers crying therapy. His clients watch short videos specially formulated to make them weep. A professional helper is on hand to gently wipe their tears away and provide comforting words. "Tears have relaxing and healing effects," says an Okinawan musician who works as one of the helpers. Hiroki Terai adds, "It has been said that one drop of tear has the effect of relieving stress for a week." I wish there were a service like this near where you live, Scorpio. The next two weeks will be a perfect time to relieve pent-up worry and sadness and anxiety through cathartic rituals like crying. What other strategies might work for you?

♐ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Fling out friendly feelers! Sling out interesting invitations! Figure out how to get noticed for all the right reasons! Make yourself so interesting that no one can resist your proposals! Use your spunky riddle-solving powers to help ease your tribe's anxieties. Risk looking odd if that will make you smarter! Plunk yourself down in pivotal places where vitality is welling up! Send out telepathic beams that say, "I'm ready for sweet adventure. I'm ready for invigorating transformation!"

♑ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): "Someone spoke to me last night, told me the truth," writes poet Doelanne Laux. "I knew I should make myself get up, write it down, but it was late, and I was exhausted from working. Now I remember only the flavor." I offer these thoughts, Capricorn, in the hope that they'll help you avoid Laux's mistake. I'm quite sure that crucial insights and revelations will be coming your way, and I want you to do whatever's necessary to completely capture them so you can study and meditate on them at length.

♒ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): As a young man, Aquarian poet Louis Dudek struck up a correspondence with renowned poet Ezra Pound, who was 32 years older. Dudek "admired him immensely," and "loved him for the joy and the luminosity" of his poetry, but also resented him "for being so magnificent." With a mix of mischief and adulation, Dudek wrote a poem to his hero. It included these lines: "For Christ's sake, you didn't invent sunlight. There was sun dazzle before you. But you talk as if you made light or discovered it." I hope his frisky tone might inspire you to try something similar with your own idols. It would be healthy to be more playful and lighthearted about anything or anyone you take too seriously or give enormous power to.

♓ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): In his book *Till We Have Faces*, C. S. Lewis writes, "Holy places are dark places. It is life and strength, not knowledge and words, that we get in them. Holy wisdom is not clear and thin like water, but thick and dark like blood." In that spirit, and in accordance with astrological omens, I suggest you seek out dark holy places that evoke wonder and reverence, even awe. Hopefully, you will be inspired thereby to bring new beauty into your life. You'll be purged of trivial concerns and become receptive to a fresh promise from your future life.

CROSSWORD

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13			14		15			
16				17					18			
19			20				21	22			23	
24						25					26	
27				28	29						30	
	31			32	33						34	
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54				55			56					
57			58			59	60				61	
62						63					64	
65							66				67	

CHOPPING BLOCKS
BY BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY

Across

- 1 Shoe with holes in it?
- 4 A la ____
- 8 Chuck
- 12 Disease that affects the liver, for short
- 13 Loved to bits
- 15 Mink variety
- 16 It's a bad sign
- 17 Città metropolitana where the pizza was supposedly invented
- 18 Total fake
- 19 Crime boss
- 21 Big pig
- 23 Smile from ear to ear
- 24 Split personality?
- 25 Be of ____ (help out)
- 26 Pasta whose name means "barley"
- 27 Bruce of the "The Hateful Eight"
- 28 Entered quickly, like the scene
- 30 Range
- 31 Kicks the bucket
- 33 Thief
- 34 Plus-size model Holliday
- 35 Computer network protocols that block unauthorized actions, and a hint to four sections of this puzzle
- 38 Planets
- 41 Sweden's prime minister Löfven
- 42 Toy sounds
- 45 Early "This Old House" host
- 46 Arranges
- 48 Place for an observation post?
- 50 Emergency copter operation
- 51 French term of endearment
- 52 Home with a distinctive roof
- 54 Senator's milieu
- 55 "Knight Rider" car
- 56 One prepping for LASIK surgery
- 57 Plasma alternative
- 59 Maine national park
- 61 It's a small matter
- 62 Team building?
- 63 English county where the Battle of Hastings was
- 64 TV warrior who wields chakrams
- 65 Split hairs?
- 66 "Along ____ lines"
- 67 Perfect place

Down

- 1 Didn't come through in the clutch
- 2 Made a dance version of a song, say
- 3 Hospital test NOT done in a tube
- 4 Change over time?
- 5 More stringy
- 6 Early video game movie
- 7 Wriggly shocker
- 8 Chinese philosophy
- 9 "Watch closely"
- 10 Real scumbags
- 11 Preached words

- 14 Off-key and cacophonous
- 15 In an inconsistent fashion
- 20 Yiddish thief
- 22 '80s swinger Ivan
- 25 Oblivious
- 29 LBJ-nominated Justice
- 32 Grieve, as Jews
- 36 Adjust anew
- 37 Big name in hummus and guacamole
- 38 Venn diagram's representation
- 39 Nice spot?
- 40 More vanilla
- 43 Like surveyors' charts
- 44 It could be anybody
- 47 Declared, without question
- 49 Like bratwurst and pretzels
- 53 Compost heap "residents"
- 56 Quick run
- 58 "Claws" channel
- 60 "And we're done," directorially

Last Week's Answer

A	I	M	S	R	S	V	P		B	O	D	E
G	L	O	W		E	W	E	R	P	A	R	E
E	L	B	O	W	Z	E	R	O	A	N	A	N
				R	A	N	D	B	L	O	Y	A
M	C	E	N	R	O	E		E	W	A	N	
I	R	A	T	E	R			N	B	A	M	V
S	O	S	O				A	N	G	E	L	O
H	U	T		R	O	B	C	O	D	E	H	I
A	C	E		E	P	C	O	T		S	A	G
P	H	R	A	S	E				A	C	H	I
				G	U	R	U		U	N	H	O
L	U	B	E	M	A	N	G	R	O	U	P	
O	P	I	N	E		R	A	B	I	N	F	A
B	O	L	T	S		E	L	A	N		O	W
O	N	E	S			P	A	N	T		R	E

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Dan Savage

Is it even possible for a couple that stopped having sex to start back up again? My girlfriend and I (we're both women) have been together for four years, and we haven't had sex for two. I thought the sex was good before it stopped, but apparently she was going through the motions. She's a sex worker, and it took her a while to figure out she was not being present, and she wanted to stop having sex with me until she could figure out how to change that. I get that and respect it. We have an open relationship, so I started having more sex with other people. And while it's fun, I do find myself wishing I could have sex with someone I actually care about—and I only care about her. She says she wants to start having sex with me again, but we don't really know how to do that. Everything is kind of terrifying and awkward. She said it's hard to go from sex with zero intimacy into sex with the intimacy turned up to 11. We're very romantic with each other, and there are other forms of physical affection like kisses and snuggling, but no making out or humping. I love her more than I knew I could love a person, and if we never do figure out how to have sex together, I'll still stay with her. But for two people who are both highly sexual and want to have sex with each other, we sure are perplexed at how to make this work.

SEX OR ROMANCE DILEMMA

“Let's cut to the chase: Yes, it is possible for a couple that has stopped having sex to start having it again,” said Dr. Lori Brotto, a clinical psychologist and a sex researcher at the University of British Columbia.

“There are two aspects of SORD's question that jump out at me: One, the reference to wanting to be present for sex, and two, the description of the situation as terrifying and awkward,” said Brotto. “SORD's girlfriend likely perfected the practice of ‘going elsewhere’ during sex while at work, which meant that it became almost automatic for her to do this while having sex in her relationship. This is classic mindlessness, and it is why mindfulness—the state of full awareness to the present moment in a kind and compassionate way—may be a tool for her to consider implementing.”

Mindfulness is the subject of Brotto's new book, *Better Sex Through Mindfulness: How Women Can Cultivate Desire*.

“Mindfulness has a long history in Buddhist meditation, and it allowed monks to sit with their present experience, including pain and suffering, for hours or days—or sometimes weeks and months,” said Brotto.

So how does this ancient mindfulness stuff work where modern girl-on-girl sex is concerned?

“The practice is simple,” said Brotto. “It involves deliberately paying attention to sensations, sounds, and thoughts in the present moment—and noticing when the mind gets pulled elsewhere and then gently but firmly guiding it back.”

So here's what you're going to do: Order a copy of Brotto's new book and read it with your girlfriend. And while you wait for the book to arrive, you're going to try a mindful touching exercise called “sensate focus.”

“She will invite her girlfriend to touch her from head to toe, minus the genitals, for 15 minutes—without the goal of triggering arousal or desire,” said Brotto. “SORD's role is to pay attention to the sensations emerging, and curtail any thoughts by redirecting attention to the here and now. And relax. After 15 minutes, they switch roles so SORD becomes the giver and her girlfriend is the receiver. This is not foreplay. It is not manual sexual stimulation. It is a mindfulness exercise designed to teach a person to remain in the present while receiving sensual touch.”

There are solo mindfulness exercises, SORD, and some good, commercially available apps out there that can walk you through them. But if your goal is reconnecting with your girlfriend, Brotto strongly recommends that you two work on mindfulness together.

“My view is that a couple-based mindfulness exercise like sensate focus will get them to their goal of mind-blowing, mind-knowing sex,” said Brotto.

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